



September 2004

Missouri Producer

Missouri Farm Service Agency

Parkade Center, Suite 225
601 Business Loop 70 W
Columbia, MO 65203

Hours

Monday - Friday
8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

State Committee

Don Fischer, Chairman
Fred Ferrell
Julie Hurst
Craig Westfall
Barbara Wilson

Staff

Tim Kelley, State Executive Director
Patty Dick, Administration
Dan Gieseke, Farm Loans
Bo Wendleton, Compliance
Gerald Hrdina, Conservation
Maurine Long, Price Support
Max Sell, Production Flexibility

DCP Sign Up Starts Oct. 1

The DCP sign-up period for fiscal year 2005 is from Oct. 1, 2004, to June 1, 2005. The CCC-509 form, "Direct and Counter-cyclical Program Contract," includes base acres, payment acres, payment yields, producer payment shares, advance direct and counter-cyclical payment selections and signatures of the producer and county office representative.

The CCC-509 must be submitted by June 1, 2005. All owners and operators who will share in the DCP payments on the farm must sign the CCC-509. Forms with signatures that are obtained after June 1, 2005, but before Sept. 30, 2005, will be accepted, but the farm will be assessed a late-file fee of \$100.

Farm producers must apply for DCP on an annual basis and can opt out of the program for any year if they so choose.

Producers must file (or have on file a current version of) the following documents to be eligible for DCP payments: a farm-operating plan (CCC-502 and related forms); an average adjusted gross income certification (CCC-526); a certification of compliance with highly erodible land and wetland conservation provisions (AD-1026).

To be eligible for payments, producers must file a certification of the acreage of all cropland on the farm (FSA-578) by the final acreage reporting date.

County Committee Election

Nominations for the county committee election were due in the county office by the close of business Sept. 3. The next step in the election process is the mailing out of the ballots, which will begin on Nov. 8. Voters have until Dec. 6 to return their ballots to the county office. Elected committee members and alternates take office on Jan. 1, 2005.

Prospective Voter Requirements If you're on the mailing list for this newsletter, the chances are you are an eligible voter. Anyone who meets the requirements in 1 or 2, plus 3, below, is eligible to vote.

1. Be of legal voting age and have an interest in a farm or ranch as either of the following:

- an owner, operator, tenant, or sharecropper, or
- a partner in a general partnership or member of a joint venture that has an interest in a farm as an owner, operator, tenant, or sharecropper; or

Dates to Remember	
Sept. 3	Last day to submit nomination for county committee election
Sept. 6	Labor Day Holiday. FSA offices closed.
Sept. 24	Deadline for CRP General Sign Up 29
Oct. 1	2005 DCP sign up begins
Oct. 1	Sign up begins for CRP Northern Bobwhite Quail Initiative
Oct. 1	Sign up begins for CRP Wetlands Restoration Initiative
Nov. 8	County committee ballots mailed to voters
Dec. 6	Last day to return county committee election ballots
Continues	Farm Storage Facility Loans
Continues	Grasslands Reserve Program

2. Not of legal voting age, but supervises and conducts the farming operations on an entire farm.

3. Eligible to participate in any FSA program that is provided for by law, regardless of the status of funding.

Discrimination Prohibited No person shall be denied the right to vote because of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation or marital or family status.

Contact your county office staff if you have questions about voter eligibility.

CRP Sign 29 Ends Sept. 24

Conservation Reserve Program general sign up 29 started Aug. 30 and runs through Sept. 24. Landowners and operators may submit offers to enroll acreage into the program. Successful offers will become effective Oct. 1, 2005, or Oct. 1, 2006, at the producer's discretion.

A limited number of acres will be accepted for enrollment, and we will use the Environmental Benefits Index to rank the acreage offered. The index is based on costs and five other factors: soil erosion, water quality, enduring benefits, air quality and wildlife enhancement. Landowners are encouraged to work with the county Farm Service Agency office staff to maximize the environmental benefits of their Conservation Reserve Program offers.

Comment Sought on CRP Future

USDA has invited public comment on several issues important to the future of CRP. A notice seeking public comment on CRP was published in the *Federal Register* on Aug. 10, and is available online at <http://www.gpoaccess.gov/fr/index.html> and on FSA's Web site at <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/crpcomments/>.

USDA is seeking public comment on a variety of issues, including:

- How to manage the large acreage set to expire from CRP;
- How to manage future CRP sign-ups and acreage; and
- How to evaluate the program's environmental effectiveness;

Submit comments in writing by Dec. 8, 2004. The preferred manner to submit comments is via the Internet at: <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/pas/>. Comments may also be submitted by email to crprule.crprule@wdc.usda.gov, or by mail to Director, Conservation and Environmental Programs Division, Farm Service Agency, Room 4714-S, Stop 0513, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW., Washington, DC 20250-0513.

EQIP Changes Hands

Beginning Oct. 1, Natural Resources Conservation Service will take over all administrative services for EQIP.

Selected Interest Rates for September 2004	
90-Day Treasury Bill	1.375%
Farm Operating - Direct	4.250%
Farm Ownership - Direct	5.875%
Limited Resource	5.000%
Farm Ownership - Direct Down Payment, Beginning Farmer or Rancher	4.000%
Emergency	3.750%
Farm Storage Facility	4.000%
Sugar Storage Facility	4.875%
Commodity Loans 1996- Present	3.000%

NRCS will be the point of contact for all EQIP services—administrative and otherwise—after Sept. 30. The county office will issue earned payments through September. NRCS will issue payments beginning Oct. 1.

EQIP participants can help us with the transition by requesting payment for all completed conservation practices as early as possible in September.

Election Guidelines Proposed

The secretary of agriculture has proposed new uniform guidelines to govern the county committee election process. The proposed guidelines can be viewed on the Farm Service Agency Web site at <http://www.fsa.usda>.

Comments on the proposed guidelines must be submitted by Sept. 16, 2004. Comments should be submitted to County Committee Election Reform Comments, Department of Agriculture, Room 3092-S, Mail Stop 0539, 1400 Independence Ave., S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-0539 or by email to countyelectionguidelines@usda.gov.

New CRP Initiatives

The Farm Service Agency introduced two new conservation initiatives in August: the Northern Bobwhite Quail Habitat Initiative and the Wetlands Restoration Initiative.

Northern Bobwhite Quail Initiative aims to create early successional grass buffers along agricultural field borders. The initiative is limited to 250,000 acres, so enrollment is targeted to specific geographic areas in 35 states that have the greatest potential to restore bobwhite quail habitat. Missouri has been allocated 20,000 acres.

To be eligible, cropland must be suitably located and adaptable to the establishment of bobwhite quail. Other criteria also apply, so ask the county office staff for details.

FSA estimates the program will provide \$125 million in payments to participants through 2007. Payments include signing incentives of up to \$100 per acre, Practice Incentive Payments of up to 40 percent of the eligible establishment cost, cost-share assistance of up to 50 percent of eligible reimbursable costs, and annual rental payments and maintenance costs.

Wetlands Restoration Initiative aims to restore 250,000 acres of wetlands and playa lakes that are located outside of the 100-year floodplain. Landowners in 48 contiguous states and Hawaii are eligible. Acreage for the initiative has been allocated on a state-by-state basis, with 1,400 acres allocated to Missouri.

FSA estimates the program will provide \$200 million in payments to participants through 2007. FSA will offer participants an incentive payment equal to 25 percent of the cost of restoring the hydrology of the site, an annual rental payment and cost-share assistance of up to 50 percent of eligible practice installation costs.

Enrollment is limited to wetlands, including playa lakes, that are beyond the 100-year floodplain. The wetlands must not be currently eligible for enrollment in either CRP continuous sign up practice CP23, Wetland Restoration, or the Farmable Wetlands Program.

Sign up begins on Oct. 1 for both initiatives, and will run continuously until 250,000 acres have been enrolled under each initiative or Dec. 31, 2007, which comes first.

Counter-cyclical Re-Payments Options

Prices for 2003 wheat finished higher than originally expected, and, as a result, producers who received a 2003 counter-cyclical payment for wheat will be required to repay it. Producers have two options for repaying the unearned counter-cyclical payment.

The default option is to have any Direct and Counter-cyclical Program payment received between October 2004 and March 30, 2005, automatically reduced by the amount of the overpayment.

The second option is to repay the amount by writing a check. If you are interested in repaying your unearned advance, please visit with the county office staff for details.

Farm Storage Facility Loans

Low cost loans for storage facilities are available for producers to build or remodel farm storage facilities for a variety of commodities, including wheat, rice, soybeans and corn.

The seven-year Farm Storage Facility Loans are available for the purchase and installation of eligible storage facilities, permanently affixed drying or handling equipment, or remodeling existing facilities. Eligible facilities include new conventional-type cribs or bins and new and remanufactured oxygen-limiting and other upright silo-type structures.

All farm storage facility loans are secured by a promissory note and security agreement. The maximum amount that may be borrowed is 85 percent of the net cost of the storage or handling equipment, up to \$100,000 for each borrower. A minimum down payment is also required. For details, contact the county office staff.

Minority Producer Register

Minority producers can join a new voluntary register to ensure that they receive the latest farm program information from the Farm Service Agency.

By joining the register, minority producers may receive outreach materials, newsletters and program announcements from FSA and other USDA agencies. They may also receive information from USDA-approved outreach partners,

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, or marital or family status. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotope, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at 202-720-2600 (voice and TDD).

To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 14th and Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C., 20250-9410, or call 202-720-5964 (voice or TDD).

such as community-based organizations, faith-based organizations and minority-serving educational institutions. USDA will control access to the register.

The register application is available at the county office or from approved USDA outreach partners.

Information is available on the Farm Service Agency's Web site at <http://www.forms.sc.egov.usda.gov/eforms/mainervlet>, and at <http://www.usda.gov/cr>.

Container Approved for Honey

Honey producers requesting marketing assistance loans may now pack their honey in approved five-gallon plastic containers. The containers must hold about 60 pounds of honey, have a tight fitting cover, have strong handles, and be lined with an FDA-approved low-density polyethylene liner.